U.S. Department
of Transportation

Federal Highway
Administration

FACT SHEET

Commercial Vehicle Information Systems and Networks (CVISN) Maryland & Virginia Prototype Tests

On Monday May 6, 1996, Federal Highway Administrator Rodney Slater presented two checks -- each for $600,000 -- to Maryland and Virginia to support their participation as Prototype States in the ITS/CVO Program's Commercial Vehicle Information Systems and Networks (CVISN) Project. This prototype effort is a partnership between FHWA and the states of Maryland and Virginia.

The Maryland and Virginia CVISN prototypes are focused on testing -- in a real world environment -- the laboratory concepts and designs developed by the Johns Hopkins University Applied Physics Laboratory (JHU/APL).

CVISN is not a new system, but rather a way for existing systems to exchange information through the use of standards and the U.S. commercially available communications infrastructure. This partnership between FHWA and the states of Maryland and Virginia provides for the testing of the electronic interoperability of CVO-related information systems and networks.

The objectives of the Prototype include:

- Distribution of safety information to computers at the roadside to target high risk carriers
- Use of license plate reader(s) at roadside to electronically identify commercial vehicles and carriers to check safety information
- Electronic collection of inspection data from the roadside and uploading to SAFETYNET
- Electronic application for credentials by motor carriers
- Interfacing of State systems to the International Registration Plan (IRP) clearinghouse
- Interfacing of State systems to the International Fuel Tax Agreement (IFTA) clearinghouse
- Electronic clearance at fixed and/or mobile sites

These objectives support the ITS/CVO Program goal of improved safety, increased savings and simplicity of systems for the efficiency for commercial vehicle operations (CVO). The CVISN goal is to foster a crash free environment and enhance performance-based safety management.

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The first showcase of the CVISN Prototype project was held on October 1, 1996 at sites in Hanover, MD and Stephens City, VA. At the Statewide Operations Center in Hanover, Maryland, the focus of the technology demonstrations was the administrative and roadside technologies. Observers saw pen-based computer technologies demonstrated by state police as well as the electronic collection of inspection data, enabling on-line submission of inspection reports and on-line queries. There was also a demonstration of the Web site established by Maryland which will lead to the capability for a motor carrier operators to apply for credentials electronically.

At the Stephens City Weigh Station Facility in Virginia, the focus was on demonstrating the electronic exchange of credential data collected on a specific truck. The inspection information was input into the computer system in Hanover, and then electronically transmitted to the Weigh Station in Virginia. As that same truck approached the Weigh Station, it was electronically screened for current truck and driver information which showed the recent inspection in Maryland, then the truck was permitted to bypass. In addition, a Roving Verification (ROVER) van equipped with license plate and transponder readers, portable equipment that can weigh trucks on the highway (weigh-in-motion), pen-based computers with wireless modems and other operations technology was demonstrated.

Additional showcase projects are under consideration for the spring and summer of 1997. Maryland and Virginia, in partnership with the FHWA and FHWA contractors, have completed work plans that will focus their technology activities. The prototype states are expected to provide "lessons learned" to the CVISN Pilot States as that initiative gets underway. An interim report on the CVISN Prototype effort is expected to be completed by the end of 1996. Additional information will be available as the prototype process continues.

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Maryland/Virginia CVISN Prototype: Safe and Efficient Shipping Operations